

The Legend of Alain-Fournier

—Martin Turnell

THE
Commonweal

**The Unwelcome
Aliens**

by Henry M. Siegel



Blue Blood for Sale

by Gunnar D. Kumlien

Volume LIX, No. 23

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THE Commonweal

week by week

McCARTHY VERSUS THE ARMY

ONE cannot help feeling somewhat sorry for Secretary of the Army Stevens. It is true that his performance was very bad, but his initial instincts were sound. The Secretary did, after all, march the Administration forces up the hill to do battle with Senator McCarthy; only the fact that he got right to the very top made him so conspicuous as he marched them ignominiously down again.

In his encounter with Senator McCarthy, Secretary Stevens acted much like the nice boy who is no match for the neighborhood bully. He came away from the now famous luncheon meeting minus his candy and his marbles, but until he read the papers he did not even know they were missing.

But pity for Secretary Stevens should not obscure the fact that a mistake has been made by the Administration which has grave consequences for the nation. What was involved in the Stevens-McCarthy controversy was an issue much larger than the question of Major Peress and his discharge. On that matter Secretary Stevens was actually in agreement with Senator McCarthy, having previously stated that he was dissatisfied with the handling of the Peress case and that future Army procedure on such matters would be drastically altered.

Despite this substantial agreement, Senator McCarthy went right ahead. He bullyragged a combat general, raised doubts about his fitness to wear the uniform, insulted his intelligence or his integrity. Aside from the treatment accorded the witness—which would have been contemptible whether the witness was a general or a defenseless Harvard professor—what the Senator wanted from General Zwicker would have involved disobeying orders he had received from the Department of the Army.

The armed forces are, and should be, under civilian control. But this does not give every Congressman a license to bully individual officers for actions taken under orders from above. Mr. Stevens, a civilian, is Secretary of the Army in the Eisenhower Administration. The Army is under his direction, and he is ultimately responsible to the President and the Congress for its affairs. If the

principle of responsibility represented by this method is not respected, the American system of government, with its carefully worked out division of powers, cannot endure.

Thus Secretary Stevens was absolutely correct when he challenged Senator McCarthy on this issue—entirely apart from any question of the proper way to treat witnesses—and he was right in saying that he himself would testify instead of General Zwicker, since he was the person responsible. A good indication of the support Secretary Stevens would have received if he had stuck to his guns may be found in the newspaper reaction to Senator McCarthy's war on the Army; even Colonel McCormick's *Chicago Tribune* turned on its hero.

THEN Secretary Stevens made his incomprehensible blunder. For the sake of party unity he allowed himself to agree to the Memorandum of Understanding—an understanding arrived at during a luncheon with Senator McCarthy, Senator Dirksen *et al.* which gave Senator McCarthy almost everything short of a ninety-nine year lease on the Pentagon. By this surrender, the integrity and morale of the Army have now been placed at the mercy of every power-seeking irresponsible in Congress.

Dr. McCarthy has a way of carrying out spectacular operations, and this one was spectacular enough even by his standards; it is unfortunate that so many of his patients later die without benefit of publicity. Surely the most devoted follower of Senator McCarthy can hardly consider this affair a triumph over Communism. Unless President Eisenhower can undo what has been done, the same tactics that crippled the Voice of America and seriously weakened the foreign service will now be employed against the Army. Before this matter is over, the Army may suffer more damage than could have been accomplished if every other dentist in uniform were a Communist.

So matters now stand at this writing. Senator McCarthy has won another victory in his running

skirmish with the Administration. As a consequence he is, of course, just that much stronger. Just why Mr. Eisenhower's political advisers think throwing meat now to such anti-Eisenhower lions will make them lie down like lambs after the fall elections is one of the great political mysteries of 1954.

Many Eisenhower supporters have already expressed their deep disappointment at the abject surrender of the Administration to Senator McCarthy. It would be idle to deny that we share their feelings. But although there is no chance of turning the present surrender into a victory, we still find it hard to believe that President Eisenhower will completely abandon the field with Senator McCarthy so clearly the victor. We still have hopes that the President will lessen the damage by prompt and effective action to protect the Army from further political depredations. If that hope is disappointed, then the nation will have suffered damage even worse than we now fear.

MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE

IT GIVES one a curious feeling occasionally to pull away from affairs and take a cold look at the state of political opinion.

We have a Secretary of State who finds an ally engaged in a desperate and exhausting war in Indochina. On the admittedly slim chance that something might be done about that war, the Secretary has agreed to go to a meeting with Communist China. The agreement to hold this meeting states in plain language that the meeting does not constitute diplomatic recognition. The idea that the Secretary pos-

sesses any illusions about the character or intentions of the Chinese regime is preposterous.

But the Secretary is undergoing serious attack for having agreed to this meeting. Why? Because in the eyes of some, it is wrong to talk with China. It is wrong to give China "de facto" recognition. It is a "Far Eastern Yalta." But if we refuse to talk with China, what happens? So far as can be seen, the French and Viet Nameese continue to die. They are incapable of attaining complete victory, and according to these Americans the United States ought not join them in attempting to extract a favorable settlement from the Chinese. But will these Americans agree to go to Indochina and help fight the Communists? No. Or will these Americans like it if the allies end the war and withdraw? No. So what are these allies supposed to do?

In this magazine's opinion, the points of principle involved in this situation do not include whom one talks with or the problem of recognition. The points of principle are: 1. that South Asia must be saved from the Communists; 2. that no more lives ought to be spent in that effort than is absolutely necessary; and 3. that sacrifices cannot be demanded of the French and Viet Nameese which we ourselves are unwilling to make.

CARACAS

SINCE World War II things have been deteriorating in Latin America. The demand for strategic raw materials has dwindled. Development programs of the Point IV type have been conducted on but a minor scale in most countries below the Rio Grande; new industries and improved agriculture have been far from extensive enough to redress the balance.

At least among the masses, the role of the United States in the battle against Hitler was a popular one. The same is not nearly as true regarding the Soviet Union, which has so long succeeded in serving as the focus for the social resentment of the oppressed. There are plenty of signs that Communism has been gaining throughout Latin America during the 1950's. In Guatemala and the British Guiana colony Communists have actually reached positions of power—thereby posing certain added problems in the matter of hemisphere defense.

Curiously enough, Communist leaders have not fared too badly in several South American dictatorships. Whereas democratic opposition and trade union leaders languish behind bars, their Communist counterparts are able to operate freely and to head up the only effective opposition to the government. That the old war cries against Yankee imperialism should be revived, and re-echoed with a

NEXT WEEK

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON writes about our secularized contemporary culture:

"Our modern Western secularized culture is a kind of hothouse growth. On the one hand, man is sheltered from the direct impact of reality, while on the other he is subjected to a growing pressure which makes for social conformity. . . . His whole life is spent inside highly organized artificial units—factory, trade union, office, civil service, party—and his success or failure depends on his relations with this organization. If the Church were one of these compulsory organizations modern man would be religious, but since it is voluntary, and makes demands on his spare time, it is felt to be superfluous and unnecessary. . . ."

new vehemence, is hardly surprising under the circumstances.

As the tenth Inter-American Conference opens at Caracas, Venezuela, feeling against the United States is heavily on the adverse side. When, after the Soviet Union had revealed itself in its true colors, we explained that Europe had to be held at all costs, the Latin American leaders understood. They acknowledged the symbolic importance of Western Europe and the need for protecting its great productive plant. But, as their own economics have faltered, they have become increasingly restive over the delay. Priority for Europe no longer has the urgency of the days when it lay virtually defenseless. Today Latin America requires attention, too, and new policies on our part.

The abstention of Costa Rica, however, is directed against the present government of the host nation rather than the United States. President Figueres' withdrawal calls dramatic attention to one of the dilemmas confronting our own policy makers. It is a recurring problem. To what extent will technical aid, government loans and favorable trade agreements strengthen dictatorial regimes at the expense of their oppressed peoples? And by that very fact would not aid to governments which flagrantly violate the Bogota and Chapultepec agreements on human rights tend to hasten the coming of Communism in Latin America rather than to retard it?

The task of Mr. Dulles and his colleagues at Caracas is, therefore, anything but an easy one. It may be possible to persuade the representatives of the other Americas of our generally friendly interest and concern. It would, for instance, be possible to find means of expanding our technical aid on a non-political basis. Since the Latin American peoples are so dependent on the prices at which they sell their raw materials, some formula might also be found to provide special compensation when such commodities as Chilean copper and Bolivian tin decline in price to the degree they have at present. Surely it must be possible to enable the producers of the world's basic raw materials to earn enough to live on.

Clearly the task of stemming the advance of Communism in Latin America is primarily a long-range one. It is hardly to be achieved by imposing sanctions on Guatemala or any other neighbors that may later follow a similar path. Even the establishment of human rights qualifications before governments are permitted to receive financial and technical aid is a proposal that calls for extreme circumspection. For representatives of the other Americas will vehemently resist interference from without. The more the prospect is examined the

greater is the evidence favoring aid to Latin America on a non-political basis to specific localities, private enterprises and social agencies in preference to national governments of every political hue.

THE PACT WITH PAKISTAN

UNITED States military aid for Pakistan has been agreed upon. The storm is over and the ships of state are still afloat. Prime Minister Nehru is not happy, but he is not quite so clamorous in his unhappiness as he was two months ago. The demonstrations he brought off made the arranging of a pact inevitable. Two sovereign states negotiating an agreement cannot be expected to permit their policy to be reversed by the public demonstrations of an outsider: this is particularly true when the outsider is assuming a sort of patronizing role towards one of the negotiating powers.

There are several interpretations offered for India's concern. The most cynical is that India wants to be the dominant power in Asia and Africa, and fears the growth of a rival. The most charitable is that India feels herself militarily threatened by Pakistan. Mr. Nehru spoke of this danger, as Kashmir remains a source of dispute between the two South Asian nations, and added that he dreaded the intrusion of the cold war into his region.

But Pakistan, stung by India's paternal airs, signed a military and economic pact with Turkey, and requested United States military aid.

The terms of the American grant were as reassuring to India as it was possible to make them. Pakistan will not give us air bases, so there is no question of the stationing there of United States troops, and the President offered his personal assurances to Mr. Nehru that Pakistan would not use the American arms against India.

Once again Mr. Dulles made up his mind on what he wanted, and has bluntly (but not belligerently) gone after it. And once again, the bluntness has angered a great many people, but in the end the controversy blows over and the deed is done.

A strengthened Pakistan, provided that it is also a stable Pakistan, removes one more temptation from the Soviets. It makes the Middle East considerably more secure against the Red Army. These advantages were weighed by the State Department and Executive against India's protest. Having decided for the pact, the American officials were correct in going through with it as calmly and resolutely as they did. We cannot always be popular; what is important is to be as certain as we can be that we are right.

QUESTION OF METHOD

DURING the week of Senator McCarthy's dark victory and the Administration's great surrender, many wise and some foolish things were said in the public press. But of all I read, a few sentences lifted from a sermon impressed me most.

The sentences I have in mind were written by the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of New York, the Right Reverend Horace B. Donegan. What Bishop Donegan said was this: "There are still those who say that Senator McCarthy's aims are good, though his methods are bad. That is to miss the point. *Democracy is a method; it is not a content* [italics mine]. It is not a uniform set of social and political opinions."

Nowadays there is so much thinking about political life in ideological terms that it is easy for all of us to lose sight of the wisdom Bishop Donegan put in that nutshell. There is simply no such thing as "Americanism" in the sense that there are such things as Nazism, Communism, fascism, etc. Nor, in this sense, is there even such a thing as "democracy." In a limited sense, the term 'un-American' has real meaning, but it always applies to method and political procedure, as Bishop Donegan implies; there is no body of political dogma or any full-fledged philosophy of life to which all Americans are bound. We are not obliged to profess belief in, say, the rationalist view of the universe in order to qualify as citizens. We do not require immigrants to subscribe to capitalist economics, progressive educational theories or even basic Judaeo-Christian religious beliefs before they are permitted to become citizens of the United States. Up to now, by and large, we have escaped the political ideologue's equating the acceptance of his own convictions with the essence of good citizenship. We have been a live-and-let-live people. But there are growing rumblings of attempts to "ideologize" democracy—and not all from Wisconsin either.

Consider for a moment the number of Americans who seem to look upon the public schools not merely as a means for universal education but as civilian West Points. The job of the school, in their view, is to indoctrinate in "democracy"—as the liberals call it—or "sound Americanism," as the super-patriots put it. What do they have in mind for public education, one wonders, when they speak of the parochial school system as being "divisive" and "un-American"? Are the public schools to be turned into ideological boot-camps which turn out indoctrinated citizens? I don't suppose that anyone would go that far, or at least put it that baldly, but there is an undeniable tendency in even vociferously anti-McCarthy circles to talk about the schools as political investments and to question any education except that given by the State.

Or another example: those who, like Mr. Blanshard

identify their own dreary secularism with American democracy. It has long seemed shocking to me that the "democratic" absolutism found in Mr. Blanshard's books got by so many Protestant journalists and reviewers who found nothing but praise for his "objectivity" and "scholarship." I began to think that they were so blinded by their own feelings about the Catholic Church that they couldn't see the boldest kind of Caesarism even when it was leaping out of the page.

Well, finally a Jewish writer has had the good sense to see that Blanshard is not only attacking Catholicism he is also totalitarianizing "democracy." In a recent issue of the weekly *New Leader*, Will Herberg put his finger on what he aptly calls Mr. Blanshard's "statist secularist idolatry." Mr. Herberg writes: "Mr. Blanshard's offensive is not against merely the Catholics but against all Jews and Christians who take their faith seriously." He might have added: "And against every one who doesn't want to see American democracy turned into an ideology."

Professor Sidney Hook summed up our present problem by making a neat distinction between political "heresy" and "conspiracy." As long as democracy remains what it is, there is truly no such thing as political heresy because there is no such thing as political orthodoxy. Harsh action must be taken against treason to keep this political climate free. That is the Hook thesis and I think it is a sane one. Bishop Donegan now has simplified it even more sharply. The only real test of a good American is whether he subscribes to the "method" of government which is democracy. His philosophical and religious views, even his political philosophy can not be called into question as long as democracy escapes the burden of a political orthodoxy—or "content."

This simple point is consistently missed in much of our Church-State and censorship arguments. In the first case, the State's profession of noncompetence in the religious sphere is widely interpreted as "religious indifferentism," which is itself a full-blown philosophy of religion. In the matter of censorship, many Catholics are horrified because the Supreme Court refuses to assume the power it doesn't have—to define a purely theological concept like "sacrilege," for instance.

The McCarthy story continuously emphasizes how precarious is the life of any democracy. But eternal vigilance requires more than an eye on the big show. Our world could die with a whimper as well as with a bang. We could find ourselves choosing between ideologies rather than rejecting all of them. When democracy becomes a "content" rather than a "method," the ideologue has won the day.

JOHN COGLEY.

The Unwelcome Aliens

IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS HUNDREDS OF WOULD-BE IMMIGRANTS HAVE REACHED
OUR SHORES ONLY TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT A HEARING

HENRY M. SIEGEL

[IKE many others, Ellen Knauff and her husband, an ex-GI, were anxious, in 1948, to establish a home in the United States. Mrs. Knauff, a native German anti-Nazi, had taken refuge from Hitler in Czechoslovakia before Nazi troops overran that country. Throughout most of her adult years she had been harried by political fear. After the war, back in her native land, she was employed, like Kurt Knauff, as a civilian worker with American Occupation forces. The two met and married in Germany. Then as East-West tensions increased, they decided that Ellen should seek U.S. citizenship here as the wife of an American.

The couple obtained the necessary papers and approval from American officials abroad. Mrs. Knauff sailed for New York, but all their plans went awry. From the August day when she passed the Statue of Liberty until the following October, Mrs. Knauff was detained on Ellis Island. She did not know why she was held nor was she able to find out. Finally, an assistant Commissioner of Immigration recommended that she be permanently excluded from the United States—without a hearing—on the ground that her mission would be prejudicial to the interests of the U.S. This recommendation was approved by the Attorney General. That was all that was disclosed. No one would say why the U.S. government felt that this bride is a menace to America.

Under authority of two wartime proclamations by President Roosevelt—which are still in effect—Mrs. Knauff was not permitted to return to Europe. So she stayed on Ellis Island as a virtual prisoner day after day, month after month, for nearly three years. Her own efforts, those of her husband, of a lawyer and Congressman were not enough to secure her release or pry from the Justice Department why she could neither enter the U.S. nor leave its jurisdiction.

It seems that at one time an anonymous informer had told U.S. immigration officials that Mrs. Knauff had passed American secrets to an allegedly Communist Czech army officer. This is known now because the Justice Department, under long and constant pres-

sure, finally disclosed the information. Mrs. Knauff's accuser admitted on the very day that she was to be returned to Germany—following legal action which went all the way to the Supreme Court—that the charge had no actual basis in fact. Yet throughout belated hearings, including the one before the Supreme Court, the Justice Department adamantly withheld the specific charges against Mrs. Knauff. All the Department would reveal was that in its opinion the presence of Mrs. Knauff in the United States would imperil the nation's safety. (The foundation for such belief, it turned out, was the unchallenged word of this anonymous informer.)

A FEW months after Mrs. Knauff reached New York, Valentina Ivanova Gardner, another GI war bride, arrived on the Pacific coast. She had planned to join her husband, who had gone on ahead to find an apartment in his home town of Buffalo. Like Mrs. Knauff, Mrs. Gardner, too, was detained for months without an explanation. She was also advised that her entry would be harmful to the U.S. But in her case the explanation was offered that she was suspected of having Communist sympathies.

In Mrs. Gardner's case there was no informer. The woman's name and her Soviet passport made her suspect. At the hearing there were no witnesses other than the twenty-eight-year-old bride herself. Mrs. Gardner charges that the word "hearing" is hardly the name for it. The Board of Special Inquiry, she said, bullied her and ordered her not to "try to act so innocent, we know what you are." She was ordered expelled.

Her departure, on October 10, 1949, was held up, however, through a writ of habeas corpus, and Federal Judge George B. Harris directed the Immigration Service to reopen the case. But the Board, claiming it lacked jurisdiction, refused to pass on the merits of the hearing. This was reversed after a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union phoned the Commissioner of Immigration, who ordered a final decision.

The Board then reversed itself and declared "the majority of the evidence at hand is such that it would

Siegel is a member of the staff of the Wilmington (Delaware) Morning News."

cause a reasonable person to doubt that the applicant had ever become indoctrinated in the principles of Communism." Here, then, was a frightened immigrant who had committed no crime, belonged to no political or subversive organization, yet had been imprisoned for thirteen months and held under bond for another seven on evidence which the prosecution itself admitted "would cause a reasonable person to doubt."

PETER Nicolof, a stateless Bulgarian musician, came to America from the International Refugee Organization camp in the Philippines where he had been cleared for entry by American officials. Immigration officers at San Francisco told him and other DP's aboard ship, "We have confidential information on you. Go to your stateroom and wait."

They waited all day. Communication with relatives at the dockside was prohibited. That night the suspects were taken to immigration quarters and locked up.

"Who can sleep that night?" Mr. Nicolof later asked J. Campbell Bruce, a San Francisco newsman. "Maybe everything clear up in the morning. But no. I wait days, then they question me for three days. This moral inquisition—the torture with white gloves—it is unbelievable." Then Nicolof, who was sponsored by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, was told he had been excluded temporarily. When he asked why, he was told that the answer would come from Washington in twenty-five days. Those days lengthened into weeks and months. After seven dreary months the answer arrived: Nicolof was to be excluded permanently; no reason was given.

A year passed. Still the refugee languished in his prison high in one of San Francisco's downtown buildings. Finally, in March, 1952—fourteen months later—he learned of the American Civil Liberties Union. Nicolof contacted this agency and after hearing his story, Ernest Besig, the Union's San Francisco director, filed for a writ of habeas corpus. The day before the show-cause order was returnable, Nicolof was freed—without any explanation whatsoever.

Even now, two years later, he wonders what it was all about. His own conclusion is that he had been secretly accused of being a Communist or a pro-Red by one of the Chinese Nationalist officials whose graft and corruption he said he had exposed while he was violin professor at the South China Conservatory of Music and for which he had been expelled from China. The United States government has maintained silence.

IGNATZ Mezei, who claimed he was born in Gibraltar, came to the U.S. in 1923 when he was twenty-six years old. For a quarter-century he lived in Buffalo. Although not a citizen, he married a native American

and raised a family. During the last World War he sold bonds, gave blood to the military, and acted as neighborhood civilian defense air raid warden.

In 1948 he went to Europe with the avowed intention of seeing his dying mother, who lived in Romania. Upon his return to the U.S. in February, 1950, he told immigration authorities he had not been permitted to enter Romania and had remained in Hungary for some months only because he had experienced "difficulty" in securing an exit permit. Mezei was not allowed to go back to Buffalo but was detained on Ellis Island.

From Washington on May 10 came word from the Attorney General, ordering Mezei's permanent exclusion and rejecting his request for a hearing. The request was turned down, the Attorney General explained, because disclosure of confidential information would be "prejudicial to the public interest."



Two attempts to deport Mezei to France were made but authorities there refused to accept him. Hungary rejected a U.S. request to take him. Mezei himself applied to twelve Latin American countries and to several more in Europe but met with the same answer. At the time the matter stood at the time the case reached the Court of Appeals in New York, this man had been confined to Ellis Island for nearly two years. During all that time, the Government refused to divulge its reasons

for exclusion—even in executive session. Mezei told the court he thought the only reason for the Justice Department's action was his previous membership in the International Workers Order, which he joined, testified, solely to receive life insurance benefits. That IWO—years later—was placed on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations.

Because the Government would not confirm nor deny Mezei's statement, the court, in a two-to-one decision, ordered the man's release. The tribunal denounced what it felt was tyranny. "To continue an alien's confinement beyond that moment when deportation comes patently impossible is to deprive him of liberty. And unless accompanied by those indicia of legal procedure that are embedded in the Constitution as the right of all men—including an objective standard of prohibited action, the right to counsel and to confront accusers and a speedy trial—such confinement must violate the Fifth Amendment."

But Judge Hand tipped off the Supreme Court position on the so-called rights of immigrants when

stated that the Justice Department's order was one of "exclusion" and not "deportation"; that Mezei's transfer from ship to shore on Ellis Island conferred no additional rights. In other words, Judge Hand declared that Mezei, although he lived in the U.S. for twenty-five years, had left the jurisdiction of the U.S.; since he was not a citizen, his return constituted a new arrival.

After the Appellate ruling in favor of the alien, the Government carried its fight to the Supreme Court. Mezei, meanwhile, was given his freedom under bond despite vehement Justice Department protests. Finally, last March, the High Tribunal announced its opinion, agreeing with Judge Hand. Justice Clark, delivering the decision, reiterated that the courts have recognized the power to "expel or exclude aliens as a fundamental sovereign attribute exercised by the Government's political departments largely immune from judicial control."

So Mezei went back to his Ellis Island prison, perhaps to languish there for the remainder of his life, seeing his wife and children only for a few hours at a time, with long, lonely weeks and months in between.*

IN 1952, the Immigration Service admitted that some five hundred other aliens were excluded without a hearing during the years 1948-51. The American Civil Liberties Union reported that at least one young woman had committed suicide after fourteen months of unaccused imprisonment, that another had escaped to the fourteenth floor parapet of the immigration office building in San Francisco and for four hours harried police and U.S. authorities with threats of a suicide leap to the concrete pavement hundreds of feet below. All these people apparently had their papers in order, for they had been given clearance by security-conscious American consular officials to sail for the U.S. Yet, they were shuttled back from whence they came. There were no hearings, no public charges, nor was evidence bared.

The basis for such procedures lies in an 1893 Supreme Court decision which was important primarily because it ended a century-long controversy between the federal government and the states over control of immigration. The case involved the exclusion of Fong Yue Ting, a Chinese immigrant, and is little different from hundreds of others. In the Fong Yue Ting case, the Court asserted that the control of immigration is incidental to sovereignty (and therefore belongs to the federal government) and that the legal right of the immigrant to enter and remain is at the full discretion of the government's officials. The 1892 opinion ruled out judicial review and defined "due process of law"

*In mid-December, 1953, the Justice Department ordered that Mezei be given a hearing. At this writing, no decision has yet been reached.

as far as immigrants were concerned. Said the Court:

Congress may authorize the courts to investigate and ascertain the facts on which the right to land depends, but, on the other hand, the final determination of those facts may be entrusted by Congress to executive officers; and in such cases, as in all others in which a statute gives a discretionary power to an officer, to be exercised by him upon his own opinion of facts, he is made the sole and exclusive judge of the existence of those facts and no other tribunal unless expressly authorized by law to do so, is at liberty to re-examine or controvert the sufficiency of evidence on which he acted. The action of these administrators constitutes due process of law.

Thus, the treatment of Valentina Gardner, who charged third degree methods; of Peter Nicolof, who was so mysteriously freed after the ACLU took his case; of the hundreds of other aliens who admittedly were denied hearings and apparently were excluded on the basis of secret charges—perhaps unfounded even on a shred of real evidence as happened with Ellen Knauff—is considered due process of law.

FORTUNATELY, this official attitude of the courts is not unanimous. And the Justice Department also shows feelings of uneasiness occasionally, for, knowing what the law is, the agency nevertheless released Nicolof, permitted belated hearings for Mrs. Knauff and Mrs. Gardner and ordered a new hearing for Mezei.

Because procedures condoned for the treatment of aliens are repugnant to our basic beliefs, one of the principles formulated in 1892-93 was nearly overturned in both the Knauff and Mezei cases, each of which was decided by a one-vote majority. Justice Robert H. Jackson, dissenting in the Knauff case, pointed out dangers inherent in our authorized immigration practices. He cited that the marriage of Mrs. Knauff to the ex-GI was approved by the Commanding General of U.S. forces in Frankfurt, that the woman was employed and twice commended by the security-indoctrinated U.S. Army. "Now this American citizen is told he cannot bring his wife to the United States, but he will not be told why. He must abandon his bride to live in his own country or forsake his country to live with his bride.

"So he went to court and sought a writ of habeas corpus, which we never tire of citing to Europe as the answerable evidence that our free country permits no arbitrary official detention. And the government tells the court that not even a court can find out why the girl is excluded. But it says we must find that Congress authorized this treatment of war brides, and even if we cannot get any reasons for it, we must say it is legal; security requires it.

"Security is like liberty in that many are the crimes committed in its name. The menace to the security of the country, be it great as it may, from this girl's admission, is as nothing compared to the menace to free institutions inherent in procedures of this pattern. . . . The plea that evidence of guilt must be secret is abhorrent to free men, because it provides a cloak for the malevolent, the misinformed, the meddlesome, and the corrupt, to play the role of informer undetected and uncorrected."

In the Mezei case, Justice Black warned that "no society is free where government makes one person's liberty depend upon the arbitrary will of another. Dictators have done this since time immemorial."

Meantime, Congress enacted an all-encompassing immigration law, the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952. Not only does this law re-frame official American policy regarding the much—and justly—attacked racial quota system, but it also details administrative practices. The logical question, then, is does the new law abolish the procedures which may certainly be described as arbitrary and tyrannical or does it merely accept and include them?

Without getting involved in the political aspects of the act, which has been denounced harshly by both former President Truman and President Eisenhower, it is still possible to note that not only are such practices condoned, but the authority for such action is strengthened. Minor consular officials, for example, are given wider latitude in approving or disapproving would-be immigrants. These officials are authorized to exclude all immigrants who, in the opinion of the consuls, are "likely at any time to become public charges." Congress, in seeking to restrict immigrants to those of "high education, technical training, specialized experience or exceptional ability who are needed urgently by the U.S." left it to the Attorney General to determine constantly changing and undefined standards.

The McCarran-Walter Act does not say one word about affording immigrants the right—or even the privilege—of a hearing, of being advised of accusations against them; not a word about long confinement triggered by the word of anonymous and perhaps grudge-bearing informers. The law says nothing about granting opportunity for the truth to emerge. Emphasis is placed on the negative side. The immigrant—heart and soul and often the brains of our nation—is looked upon with suspicion. That he is a person, with emotions of love or patriotism which could and should be fostered, that he is a person who wants only a chance to support himself and his family in a decent manner, that he is a person who has fought and fled dictators of both the political Left and Right—these attributes do not seem to matter to those who authored and approved our administrative procedures, nor to those who carry out the law.

FROM ITALY

Blue Blood For Sale

Rome

IN the picturesque and noisy streets of Naples, among the carts bearing fish, fruits or vegetables for sale, can sometimes be seen carts with puzzling loads on them and strange-looking men behind them. On the carts, fluttering in the wind from the sea, are ancient-looking parchments bearing bright, impressive coats of arms, crowns, plumes and family trees. In the carts are leather-bound volumes fitted with locks. The man behind such a display may look extremely dignified and intellectual, although his clothes are shabby and he is in need of a shave. Unlike the other merchants around him, he will not shout or praise his stock, and if you ask the price of one of the old volumes in the belief that he is a *bouquiniste*, he will inform you politely that they are not for sale. If you are a foreigner he probably will leave it at that, looking slightly bored. If you are an Italian, he will diffidently tell you that he is a *professore*, interested in historical research, and specializing in genealogy.

He will gesture towards the parchments, and explain that they are an indication of where his studies have taken him: they are the coats of arms of families who had not even known of their noble descent—princes, marquises, counts, barons, with high-sounding, complicated, so-called "corkscrew names." As if thinking aloud, he will stress the remarkable fact that so many people ignore their noble origin. He will point out the possibility of tracing genealogy—provided that one is a patient man, like himself, who loves research for its own sake. If you are interested, he remarks, he might manage to do some research for you. Your aristocratic looks must come from noble lineage. If you would just leave your name, your mother's maiden name, your birthplace and address, and a small sum for expenses, he would be in a position to let you know soon. . . .

Thus new nobility is created in southern Italy—as if the old nobility were not big enough. The pushcart "genealogists" have experienced an almost incredible boom since the end of the war, and the number of people discovering their noble descent is constantly increasing. The first to discover it were the black marketeers, many of whom grew immensely rich during the war, particularly after the arrival of the abundantly-supplied American troops. They obey the apparently invincible human instinct to crown economic success with a golden ornament.

The fall of the monarchy in 1946 ended the laws which had punished the misuse of aristocratic titles. These laws had rarely been enforced but had exerted a certain restraining influence. Now, in the Italian republic, aristocratic titles are not officially recognized and consequently their misuse is not punishable. The inflation of the Italian nobility is therefore greater than it ever has been.

Some of these new noblemen use fake trials to obtain a sort of official sanction for their titles. Someone is hired to sue them for the misuse of a title; the "someone" fails to prove his case; and the newspapers tell of a Count so-and-so who has proved his ancient descent before the court. The method is all the more efficient as the true Italian nobility, which is one of the oldest in Europe, has no means other than civil trials to defend its own titles.



One of the most exhilarating of these trials was recently won by one of Italy's best known comic actors, Toto. He sued an unknown gentleman who pretended to be the only heir to the throne of ancient Byzantium. Toto appeared in court with his fiancée, an Italian chorus girl who once had been named "Miss Cheesecake" by a group of American GIs, and produced documents to prove that he is the only and true heir to the ancient throne of Byzantium and the Eastern Empire. The public took this to be an extremely funny publicity stunt. But Toto was deadly serious. The true name on his calling cards is Prince Antonio Focas Flavio Angelo Dukas Comneno de Curtis of Byzantium.

But the boom of the genealogists is nothing compared with the postwar boom of the knightly orders which gravitate around the Vatican, some religious congregations and other venerable institutions. They too have flourished under the republican atmosphere. They favor such archaic and high-sounding names as "Constantinian," "Capitular," "Sovereign," "Sacred," "Angelic," "Celestial," "Imperial" or "Equestrian" and they usually associate themselves with a saint or holy place

and have a vaguely humanitarian activity as background. Many never existed in the past, in spite of their medieval names, and live on documents of doubtful veracity (the "genealogists" again). Others were genuine at one time and have been resurrected by "smart" businessmen or crooks. Still others hide behind genuine religious orders now in financial difficulty (and there are many such in Italy, particularly of nuns, living in tragic circumstances) who are grateful for the small aid the "knights" give them.

A typical example is the so-called "Order of the Knights of Saint Bridget of Sweden" (or "of the Holy Savior"). It has never been established that the religious order which was founded in 1378 and still exists was ever associated with an order of knights. The present knightly order was founded a couple of years ago in Naples by a modest clerk named Vincenzo Abbate. With the aid of the genealogists he discovered an illustrious descent and came to call himself "Count Don Vincenzo Abbate de Castello-Orléans, General Grandmaster of the Order of the Knights of Saint Bridget of Sweden." His order flourished and soon he was distributing knighthoods and "Great Crosses of Justice and of Magistral Grace" right and left in return for contributions for "humanitarian purposes." If the person to be decorated was particularly illustrious, the decoration was in return for an autographed photograph suitable for publication in the order's handsome bulletin.

In many cases, Abbate generously included in the order people whose permission he had neglected to obtain, and finally he was in possession of a list so impressive that he offered a "Great Cross of Justice" to a member of the Swedish Royal Family. It was promptly returned, and the Swedish Minister in Rome undertook an investigation of the use of the Swedish flag in the ceremonies of the order. He found the Grandmaster, uniformed like a comic opera prince, receiving new members in solemn church ceremonies in the presence of high prelates, among them an Italian Cardinal. He found that General Peron had agreed to be a patron of the order, and that the membership included General Franco, Prince Rainier III of Monaco, and at least one American Cardinal. He also found that the Mother Abbess of the religious order of Saint Bridget in Rome had repeatedly and vainly protested against the Grandmaster's use of the order's name, but that the Bridgettine nuns in Spain apparently had no objection to the use of the name.

Soon afterwards the *Osservatore Romano* published one of its periodic lists of those orders and knighthoods which are not recognized by the Holy See but whose names might indicate a relation to the Church. There were no less than twenty-three such orders on the list and one of them was the Order of the Knights of Saint Bridget of Sweden.

What was the reaction of the Grandmaster? He laid low for a while, and at last report plans to transfer his activities to Madrid. To him and his colleagues of the other twenty-two "knightly orders," the Holy See's non-recognition means little. They do not need the Vatican's recognition to carry on in that gray zone between what is illegal and what is not quite illegal. In this year, in the middle of the twentieth century, all they need is the vanity and credulity of ordinary people. It is fascinating to read through their publications and membership lists. All share the unctuously pious language of many religious papers. The membership is a hallucination-like parade of degenerated aristocrats, vain or credulous prelates, South American diplomats and heads of state, the *nouveaux riches* from Lebanon and Liberia. The racket flourishes and nobody really seems to care about cleaning it up.

The Holy See does not limit itself to a platonic non-recognition of these orders. During recent years, according to the desires of the Pope, it has dropped all sorts of traditions which for many centuries had been the privileges of the authentic "black" aristocracy of Rome. Too many Vatican aristocrats have proved to be unworthy of their forefathers, and have concluded the aristocratic cycle described by Chateaubriand: first, the phase of service; then the phase of privileges; finally the phase of vanities. The "black" aristocracy of Rome long ago reached the phase of vanities.

It is an old tradition that at the beginning of each year the Pope receives the Vatican aristocracy in a special collective audience. Pius XII has reluctantly followed the tradition, but last year he made a speech to this blue-blooded audience in which he led them to understand that "a page of history has been turned," and that that year's audience was the last one. This year he did not receive them, although the event would have taken place before his present illness. The Papal policy is being carried out, but it seems to have little effect on the racket or its willing victims.

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN.

APPEAL

Rev. Joseph Menezes, St. Joseph's School, Catholic Mission, Chingleput, South India, asks for aid for his impoverished school children, who number over a thousand and most of whom are pagans. He wants to open classes and start clubs for the children in the care of his mission, many of whom cannot attend school for lack of clothing and are very poorly fed.

St. Joseph's School would also find extremely useful all sorts of second-hand materials including stationery, pencils, canceled stamps, magazines, religious articles and food parcels. Packages should be marked "Unsolicited Gift" and should not be sent registered. Donations and packages may be sent directly to Father Menezes or c/o the Archbishop of Madras.

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THE STAGE

RUTH DRAPER

I WENT to an evening of Miss Draper with a strong reluctance: the solitary exhibition of individual talent has become a cliché, and we have seen lately too many illustrations of the debilitating point to which theater is brought by emphasizing the primacy of the performer. Whatever reservations one may have entertained about the technique, however, dissolve—as they must surely for each spectator—before the purity and indivisible singleness of this irreplaceable artist's work.

Miss Draper's art is too quicksilver to snare in any critical formulae: only love, as Rilke said in one of his letters, can grasp and hold and fairly judge what it achieves. Yet certain observations inevitably suggest themselves: above all, astonishment that in this time of extreme assertion of personality, an artist—working in a profession where vanity is a constant, subtle danger—can bring such submissive humility to the material with which her imagination presents her. One hears much of the suspension of disbelief, of the artist's immersion in his task; Miss Draper achieves it in a degree which is unexcelled. Each of her characters is an entity—physically, morally, intellectually, spiritually, socially. All of her observation is original, and that in itself is uncommon. What raises her work to permanent interest is her faculty of transforming that observation into a vision which is individual, immediate and direct.

Here one notes an aspect of Miss Draper's art which has never been adequately recognized—her affinity with the masters of the novel. Like them, she excels not in the delineation of drama but in portraiture. Her society matrons are creations of which Jane Austen might have been proud. She shares, too, the compassionate sympathy of the great novelists, their pleasure in the sheer variety and abundance of life. One has only to compare some of her monologues with the sketches of, say, Dorothy Parker, to learn a profound lesson about the decline of humanism in our society: we may have gained a bit of malicious wit, but what we lost was a world. Miss Draper takes too much delight in the personalities of others to be transfixed by her own. She is interested in penetrating her characters, not merely in striking off a good likeness. Her effect is tonic, her achievement sobering, and her place in our affections and memories, I am certain, secure. (*At the Vanderbilt.*)

LULLABY

MR. Don Appell's farce, a garish cartoon of skirmishes on the domestic front, has the virtues of some wit and much warmth; there are also three per-

formances in a rich, vivid vein which give the play the occasional roustabout flavor of life. One of these is Mary Boland's sly, voracious mother-in-law: keyed to a coarser style than Miss Boland's usual glittering witlessness, but nonetheless rudely grand, thoroughly distinguished and professional work. Jack Warden's good-natured lout is excellent too, but much of the evening's pleasure rises from Kay Medford's shaded playing of an unshaded role. Miss Medford's ability to suggest a vulgar vitality, neither chilled by grossness nor heated by an excess of sentiment, again indicates the presence of an actress whose poise and talent are of the most serious account. (*At the Lyceum.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

AND THE WORLD LAUGHS WITH YOU

THE English "Genevieve" is another of those zany minor films that make American moviegoers ask why British films are better than ours. They are not really better. ("Genevieve," for instance, is no more entertaining than "The Long, Long Trailer.") But their good films, like ours, are very very good. The English are particularly successful in developing character, especially with the minor roles, and in kidding themselves. "Genevieve," which is about two couples making the London-to-Brighton Commemoration Run in ancient automobiles, is a hilarious spoof. And its cast, directed by Henry Cornelius, who also gave the picture a handsome production in Technicolor, plays it delightfully.

John Gregson portrays the owner of a 1904 Darracq named Genevieve with all the enthusiasm of a boy scout going on his first camping trip. His wife, charmingly played by Dinah Sheridan, who cannot see what's so wonderful about getting into a fifty-year-old car and making the London-Brighton drive, accompanies him with considerable reluctance. And his good friend (Kenneth More) driving an aged Spyker takes his current girl friend as his traveling companion—a woman (Kay Kendall) who is as ill-suited to this sort of nonsense as the huge dog she drags along as a co-passenger. The fun is not so much in the plot as it is in the little incidents that happen throughout the trip and in the dialogue in William Rose's sparkling script for this fine film.

THE translation of Broadway musical hits into the movies without revamping the shows to suit the cinema medium may start a trend. "New Faces," based

on the clever stage revue, has been filmed in color and CinemaScope; and while some of the skits (particularly the take-offs on "Death of a Salesman" and lecturers about Africa) are still funny, most of the show has lost the intimacy that gave it bounce and warmth in the legitimate theater. A slight and almost silly plot attempts to hold the revue together, but "New Faces" is essentially a *révue* with a series of unconnected songs and sketches in which Ronny Graham, Eartha Kitt, Robert Clary and others from the original show shine brightly. In spite of the film's being quite pretty at times and frequently amusing, it has a static and studied quality; and the device of not lowering a curtain at the end of each sketch often leads to confusion. The audience, used to conventional movies, has no way of knowing that one scene has ended and another is starting.

THE movie version of "Top Banana" was filmed directly from the stage production. Although the camera moves once in a while for medium shots and close-ups, the results are exceedingly static; the only lively quality of the picture comes from the antics of a volatile cast led by Phil Silvers. It's about a comedian who was formerly in burlesque and is now the funniest guy on television—when his gag writers are around. "Top Banana" has its very funny moments, but it also has its vulgar ones—a type of calculated vulgarity stemming from old-fashioned burlesque shows that makes the audience feel it's being imposed on. Phil Silvers is a remarkably skilful comedian and has a wonderful sense of timing, but this whole picture seems to be planned for the same audience for whom the comedian and his co-workers are designing their television soap program in the show-within-the-show. "Who buys soap?" "Dirty people," he replies.

THE costumes and sets in "Red Garters" practically steal the show. All of "Red Garters" was photographed indoors with stylized scenery reminiscent of what we usually see on the stage in modern ballets, or in shows like "Our Town" and "Oklahoma!" The story itself is slight. Director George Marshall spent most of his efforts kidding other horse operas and allowing his cast to sing and dance and joke in a manner befitting the handsome, colorful sets. Rosemary Clooney, Jack Carson, Guy Mitchell and the other lively people work hard to keep things moving. There are several dance numbers in the Agnes de Mille manner (but not as good) and the music tries to be Rodgers and Hammerstein, without too great success. In a word, "Red Garters" is little more than a colorful and pleasant parody.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

MARCH 12, 1954 577

COMMUNICATIONS

"FREEDOM OF THE SCREEN"

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: It seems to me that William P. Clancy's recent analysis of the Supreme Court Decision in the "M" and "La Ronde" motion picture censorship case [February 19], is somewhat superficial and partakes of the same dogmatism he decries in the Catholic press.

It's both superficial and dogmatic to assume that this decision means that the Supreme Court will ultimately rule out all prior censorship of motion pictures, or that all the justices would "privately agree" with Messrs. Justices Douglas and Black that all prior censorship is unconstitutional.

A casual reading of the presentation of the cases to the Court would indicate that the Justices recognized the right and necessity of the State to exercise prior restraint of some kind on the showing of motion pictures. For example, Mr. Justice Jackson in a colloquy with the attorney for the motion picture interests pointed out that if there were no prior restraint then it would be possible, for example, for a motion picture operator to select a location near a high school and show a picture explaining how to induce an abortion.

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Is it fair to use the editorial of one Catholic paper as the basis for assuming that its opinion is fairly typical of many Catholic papers who you maintain judge all issues as either "black or white" and who cannot be rational when film censorship is discussed? There are some issues which are "black or white" and it may well be that the right of states to censor motion pictures is one of these. Is there not a vital difference between motion pictures and the written word—a difference that might call for prior regulation?

It's superficial and dogmatic to assert that "prior censorship of motion pictures by the State is nearing its end" and that official censors must know it. Is it not possible that this Supreme Court decision will strengthen state censorship because it points up the necessity of clarifying the language of statutes? The Supreme Court film decisions have been against lack of clarity and ambiguity of language—not against the right of states to protect its citizen's welfare by prior censorship. This fact seems to be well recognized, because bills are now pending in the states concerned to clarify the wording of censorship statutes.

It is superficial and dogmatic to call the question of prior censorship *academic* because only six states and some municipalities actually have it. *These six states alone serve as an effective check point for the other forty-two.* From the economics of the matter alone what producer could stay in business if his film could not be shown in New York, Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Kansas?

It is naive to hold that motion pictures can be regulated solely by punitive laws which bring to trial those who violate criminal statutes. Let us take a hypothetical case: "Dial L for Lust" is booked in a first-run theater in a large city. It opens with the usual publicity fanfare. At the end of the first week a patron brings charges against the film as being "immoral and obscene." The theater owner is arrested. He immediately posts bond and is back in business at the same old stand—with excellent publicity for the film. An injunction? It may be denied pending hearing or if granted might quickly be overridden on appeal. The show goes on. Finally the trial. He may be judged innocent on a technicality. If found guilty he pays a modest fine—usually not over \$500—and goes free to continue business.

All this presumes that (1) he's arrested to begin with, and (2) that the District Attorney will prosecute—and many of them won't risk a trial unless they have an airtight case. In the meantime "Dial L for Lust" is doing its damage to individual souls and to the moral fabric of democracy. . . . Democracy, whose freedom we are trying to "protect" by eliminating the right of the state to safeguard public welfare through prior licensing of motion pictures.

Does the state have the right to *prevent* murder?—

or must it wait until murder has been committed and be satisfied with conviction of the murderer?

To be sure, governmental censorship can be gravely dangerous — most particularly when it is guided by poorly written statutes, and the Supreme Court should protect us against abuses by censorship bodies. But to say that all prior censorship of motion pictures should be struck down in the name of freedom because these dangers exist does not logically follow.

I do not share the alarmist views of those who hold that morality “goes down the drain” each time the Supreme Court calls for clarification of censorship statutes, or that our democracy will be wrecked if prior censorship is eliminated altogether. On the other hand, neither do I share the alarmist view of those who hold that prior censorship of motion pictures is “repugnant to any free society.”

I believe that each state has the right to take those steps which its elected representatives believe are necessary to protect the welfare of its citizens. If in some states this means prior censorship of motion pictures then this is the state's right—providing its action is in conformity with the higher laws of the land as interpreted by the Supreme Court.

In closing I beg to disagree with Mr. Clancy's accusation that “too frequently it is Catholic voices which are raised most violently in protest and fear whenever freedom is born.” This accusation is meaningless unless “freedom” is defined. There are many kinds of freedom—some spurious, some real. It has been my experience that intelligent and reasonable Catholics can tell one from the other—and are prepared to live and fight and die for real freedom.

MARTIN H. WORK,
Executive Secretary,
National Council of Catholic Men

REPLY

ATTEMPTS to read the minds of eminent public figures are always risky, and when these men are the Justices of the nation's highest court the risks are doubled. The ambiguities which presently characterize the “freedom of the films” controversy underline this because they are in large part of the Justices' making. They have guaranteed “freedom of the screen” but have deliberately refrained from spelling out exactly what this means.

When I wrote that “it is difficult to believe that the other Justices . . . would not privately agree with their more outspokenly ‘liberal’ colleagues” [Mr. Justice Douglas and Mr. Justice Black in their view that *all* prior censorship of films is unconstitutional] and that “whether at one stroke or case by case, prior censorship of motion pictures by the State is nearing its end,” I was not attempting to read the Justices' minds. I was rather drawing what seems to me a logical (and neces-

sary) inference from the direction in which the Court has been moving and from the principle of “freedom of the screen” it has established. What I may find “difficult to believe” may, of course, turn out to be the actual case.

The “freedom of the screen” principle is a direct reversal of the Court's 1915 Mutual Film Corporation decision which had excluded motion pictures from the Constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and of the press on the grounds that motion pictures were “a business pure and simple.” Prior censorship of films by individual States and communities was in large part based on and protected by this decision. In “The Miracle” decision, and now, in the “La Ronde” and “M” decision the Court affirmed that motion pictures are more than a “business pure and simple,” that they involve the communication of ideas. Some hedging has taken place, of course. As I noted in my article, the decision has not been “spelled out.” But the *principle* of the screen's freedom has been established and I can conceive of no way in which it can be reconciled with prior censorship of films by the State. If there is some way in which the two can be reconciled I would be interested to learn of it.

Mr. Work asks if it was fair of me to quote an editorial from one Catholic paper as “typical” of Catholic reaction to the Court's decision. I assure him that it was unfortunately very typical of a wide cross-section of the American Catholic press. There were notable exceptions, but this editorial's tone and line of reasoning fairly represent, I think, the majority opinion.

I agree with Mr. Work that it would be naive to hold that motion pictures can be regulated solely by particular laws. As I observed in my article, democracy can never be made completely safe; the notion of hazard is involved in its very definition. From any absolute point of view, democracy will always be an imperfect institution. Some murders *cannot* be prevented (to use Mr. Work's analogy) because there are limits to what the democratic state can prevent if it is to remain democratic. It cannot, for example, imprison a man because it suspects he *may* commit murder. It must insure due process, even though, in insuring it, a few murderers may go free.

Affairs of State are notoriously illogical and one cannot prophesy their future course through a syllogism. The Supreme Court may never logically apply the principle it has established. It may conceivably continue to permit some form of prior censorship of films. But from the evidence at hand, I find it difficult to believe that logical application of the principle can fail to come from the Court, either now or eventually. My point in the article was that its coming will not necessarily mean the death of morality and that many Catholics might do well to rethink their position on political “freedom.”

WILLIAM P. CLANCY.

MARCH 12, 1954

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The Legend of Alain-Fournier

MARTIN TURNELL

ALAIN-FOURNIER is known to the majority of Anglo-Saxon readers simply as the author of a single book, *Le Grand Meaulnes* (which has been translated under the title of *The Wanderer*), but in his own country he has become a legendary figure. He was one of the five writers to whom a whole number of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* was devoted between 1920 and 1930, but he enjoyed an honor which was not accorded to any of the others. In 1937 the lycée of Bourges, where he was a pupil for a few months, was re-named the Lycée Alain-Fournier, and there are book-shops called after his novel in Paris and at the little town of Mirande in the south of France where he was garrisoned for a short time during his military service. The French are more attentive than other peoples to the fame of their writers but, as Mr. Gibson remarks in his biography [*The Quest of Alain-Fournier*. By Robert Gibson. Yale. \$4.], Alain-Fournier's celebrity was not purely literary, and it was not an accident that his legend came into being between the wars. He is an enchanting writer certainly, but he was also a symbol of "the lost generation," the youth of France who perished in the First World War.

Henri Alban Fournier, as he was christened, was born on October 3, 1886, at La Chapelle d'Angillon in the department of the Cher. He was the elder child of a village schoolmaster, and the rural surroundings in which his early years were spent played a vital part in his formation. There were in his make-up two conflicting impulses. One was a restless desire for adventure and discovery which he seems to have inherited from his father's family. The other was a profound attachment to his native province. The first of these impulses became transformed into a desire to discover and explore an inner world—the mysterious childhood paradise which is evoked in the novel. The attachment to his native Berry remained with him all his life. He was seldom happy when away from it, and he used it as the setting of his novel. It is, as we shall see, the skill with which he blends these two impulses, so that the childhood paradise seems an extension of the life of the peaceful and remote corner of France in which the story unfolds, that gives the book its strange haunting charm.

He left home for the first time at the age of twelve when he was sent to the Lycée Voltaire in Paris. Three

years later he transferred to the lycée of Brest where he intended to study for the entrance examination to the training ship *Borda*, which was the naval equivalent of the famous Saint-Cyr military academy. At the end of sixteen months, he abandoned his naval ambitions and began to think of a career as a teacher. He went to the lycée of Bourges a few miles from his birthplace and then, in 1903, he moved to the Lycée Lakanal in Paris in order to study for the entrance examination to the Ecole Normale Supérieure. At Lakanal he met Jacques Rivière, his future brother-in-law and the future editor of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*.

TWO years after this arrival in Paris an event occurred which though trifling in itself had a decisive effect on the man and the writer. At Lakanal he had discovered the French Symbolists and had begun to write himself. Now one of the most characteristic figures in the work of the Symbolists is the *princesse lointaine*, the "far-off princess," the mysterious woman who inspires not merely love, but—the adjective is of capital importance for an understanding of Alain-Fournier and his masters—*pure* love. He had already had an emotional freindship with a girl whom he had met on a train, but it had been stopped by his mother who had intercepted a letter written by the girl during the school holidays. He was now to form an attachment of a very different kind. On Ascension Day, 1905 he saw a girl going into the church of St. Germain de Prés who seemed the living incarnation of his ideal. Although extremely shy, he was so struck by her that he followed her and got into conversation with her. She was already engaged to be married and though surprised to find herself accosted by a schoolboy, she seems to have been impressed and even moved. She told him her name—it was Yvonne—but said that she could not see him again; and in fact they were only to meet once more, years later when she was the wife of a naval officer at Toulon and the mother of a family. This "brief encounter," as Mr. Gibson calls it, was decisive for the writer in that it provided the initial impetus for the novel and the model for its heroine. It was decisive for the man because for years he brooded over his lost love, and allowed himself to drift into a number of emotional entanglements which were the cause of considerable suffering both to himself and to what can only be called his victims.

Mr. Turnell, author of "The Novel in France," contributes frequently to literary journals in this country and in his native England.

THE shattering effect of his meeting with Yvonne became apparent the following year. He failed hopelessly in his examination, and though he managed to pass the written part in 1907 he was rejected at the oral. The same year he was called up for two years military service, and in October reported at the barracks of Vincennes for training with the 23rd Regiment of Dragoons.

He eventually transferred to the infantry and more successful in his army than in his civilian examinations, graduated as an infantry officer.

He was released from the army in September, 1909, and began to earn a living as the writer of a literary gossip column in the *Paris-Journal*, a newspaper which has since disappeared. He was extremely attractive to women and though his pain at the loss of Yvonne had increased rather than diminished, he plunged about this time into a tempestuous affair with a woman called Jeanne. It was very different from the ethereal devotion to Yvonne and seems to have cost him his innocence. "She had nearly all the best qualities," he wrote in an unpublished letter. He added, significantly, "except purity," and there is no doubt that she paid dearly for the exception. In 1911 he was recalled to the army for twenty-eight days training at Mirande, which is not far from Lourdes. He was particularly unhappy at this period. It coincided with a religious crisis, with an acute phase in the slow, painful recovery of faith which like Rivière's conversion had begun when he came across the work of Claudel at Lakanal. He speaks enviously in his letters of the faith of the pilgrims whom he saw while visiting Lourdes, but at the same time he was involved in another affair which was as far from being "pure" as that with Jeanne.

In December 1912 *Le Grand Meaulnes*, which he had begun to plan as long ago as 1905, was completed. It was serialized in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* from July to November 1913, appeared in book form in October of the same year, and nearly won the Prix Goncourt.

On the outbreak of war in August 1914 Alain-Fournier and Rivière, who had married Isabelle Fournier in August 1909 and was now secretary of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, were both mobilized and sent to the front. Rivière was taken prisoner on August 24. On September 22, a few days before his twenty-eighth birthday, Alain-Fournier was reported missing when a French patrol was ambushed at St. Rémy, and was never heard of again.

ALAIN-FOURNIER'S vast correspondence with Rivière, which covers the years 1905 to 1914, contains some of the most delightful letters written by a young man since the letters of the poet Jules Laforgue. It is also an invaluable document on French literary



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SHEED & WARD

New York :

MARCH 12, 1954 **58**

taste in the first decade of the present century, and a striking picture of the intellectual development of two highly gifted young writers. The letters to his family and to his friend René Bichet are no less delightful, while the fragments of verse and prose collected in the posthumous volume called *Miracles*, which has a long and revealing introduction by Rivière, deserve to be read; but his fame rightly rests on his solitary novel.

François Seurel, the narrator, is the son of a village schoolmaster and a pupil at his father's school at Sainte-Agathe. Augustin Meaulnes, known as "the big Meaulnes," comes to the school from another part of the country and is at once recognized by the rest as their leader. One day M. Seurel calls for volunteers to go to the local station to meet the grandparents who are coming to spend Christmas at the school. Meaulnes offers to go but is not accepted. He borrows a horse and carriage in the village and sets out to intercept the visitors at a junction some distance away. He loses his direction and finds himself the uninvited guest at a fête given by M. de Galais on his estate for his son Frantz's engagement. The engagement goes wrong. Frantz arrives without his fiancée, attempts to commit suicide and abandons the home. Meaulnes meets his sister, Yvonne de Galais, and falls violently in love with her. One of the other guests gives him a lift back to Sainte-Agathe, and then the difficulties begin. He does not know the name of the mysterious manor he has visited and cannot find it again. Frantz de Galais turns up as a clown at the village fair and extracts a promise from Meaulnes to help him find his lost fiancée. Meaulnes leaves Sainte-Agathe and goes to Paris. François, who by this time has become a teacher, continues the search for the manor and locates it through a chance remark by an aunt. Meaulnes returns and marries Yvonne, but on the wedding night Frantz reappears and calls on him to make good his promise. Meaulnes goes with him and is successful in the quest, but when he returns it is to find that his wife has died in childbirth, leaving him a baby daughter. The book closes with him setting out again in search of adventures.

François Seurel and Meaulnes are both partial portraits of the artist, and they reflect the conflicting impulses in his nature to which I have already referred. One is the solid, realistic countryman firmly attached to the soil; the other is the spiritual adventurer who can find rest nowhere. The double portrait helps us to understand the peculiar place that the book occupies in modern French fiction. At the close of the nineteenth century the French literary scene was divided between the Naturalists and the Symbolists. The Naturalists tried to give a photographic representation of reality and life was smothered under a wearisome catalogue of material objects. The Symbolists rebelled against the world of nineteenth-century positivism, but they ended by re-creating into a dream world inhabited by wraiths which

had little connection with the humdrum world of everyday reality.

Alain-Fournier's novel is a success because he contrived to strike a balance between these extremes. He had been deeply influenced by Symbolism, and its influence is apparent in the creation of Meaulnes, in the figure of Yvonne de Galais, and in the search for the lost paradise. We can see how easily the book might have become just another Symbolist novel, but is saved by the setting. The schoolmaster and his family, the villagers and the French countryside are compellingly *there*. They are not merely a background; they provide a norm, and François himself is the link between the everyday world and the world of Meaulnes. Alain-Fournier originally intended to call his novel "the mysterious manor." The fête on M. de Galais' estate is the most impressive part of the book, but instead of being a modern fairy tale, with Yvonne in the role of "the far-off princess," it is as real as the village of Sainte-Agathe and its inhabitants. It is this that makes the whole episode completely convincing and infinitely touching. What we have is not two worlds set side by side, but the interpenetration of two realms of experience. The humdrum setting gives point and substance to the realm of dreams and is itself suffused in a poetic glow which is derived from it.

L E *GRAND MEAULNES* has been described as "a minor masterpiece," and the formula is exact. It was the first novel of a young man, and compared with the great works of European fiction it must clearly rank as "minor." The *great* masterpiece brings a new vision to literature which changes the pattern of experience; the minor masterpiece simply introduces a variation into the existing pattern, uncovers a fresh corner of experience. But they have one thing in common. It is the *finality* of their vision, and it is this that makes them last. *Le Grand Meaulnes* gives final expression to what Mr. Gibson well calls "that fleeting period of life. . . between the end of youth and the beginning of full manhood." For this reason its sensitiveness, its insight and its poetry have exercised a subtle and pervasive influence on the work of the French novelists who followed Alain-Fournier.

Mr. Gibson has written a very attractive biography. Temperamentally, he is perfectly suited to his subject and his book is evidently a labor of love. He has not only explored the Alain-Fournier country very thoroughly, but he has had the assistance of Mme. Isabelle Rivière, who has placed a great deal of unpublished material at his disposal. He is able to throw much new light on the autobiographical elements in the novel and on the way in which it is constructed, while his final estimate reveals him as a sympathetic and discerning critic.

A Question of Vocation

OBEDIENT MEN. By Denis Meadows. Appleton-Century-Crofts. \$3.50

By FRANCIS SWEENEY

"YOU will find at Rome," Lord Chesterfield wrote to his son in 1749, "some of all of the religious Orders in the Christian world; inform yourself carefully of their origin, their founders, their rules, their reforms, and even their dresses; get acquainted with some of all of them, but particularly with the Jesuits, whose Society I look upon to be the most able and best governed society in the world." And later he wrote: "Have you made an acquaintance with some eminent Jesuits? I know no people in the world more instructive."

Chesterfield was voicing a perennial interest, touched with fear, which has resulted in a swarm of Jesuit characters in English literature. Great writers like Donne, Fielding, Macaulay and Thackeray have written about Jesuits, whether for the king's florins or the common reader's Bedlam penny. The result, from Shakespeare's equivocator to Waugh's Father Rothschild, is a

Newgate Calendar of ecclesiastical picares. It was a rich vein while it lasted, and that the lode is not wholly played out is shown in the occasional book which denounces the Jesuits for their scandalous history or berates the Church for keeping the ancient dragon still mewed up in the Vatican stables.

Though *Obedient Men* will borrow some of its popularity from the Jesuit of British folklore, it is not an exposé of the variety of the "Awful Disclosures." It is a description—a reverent and honest and never self-pitying one—of the process of making a Jesuit, written by one who for ten years was a devout and obedient son of the Society.

Denis Meadows entered the Church as a young man and, against the wishes of his family and the advice of his Jesuit confessor, joined the Jesuits at their Roehampton novitiate, near London. His description of novitiate life is as detailed and graphic as one is likely to find in print anywhere, with perhaps too much insistence on certain accidental rigors of training.

From Roehampton he went to Stonyhurst, where he followed his course in scholastic philosophy for three years. Here his spirit was at peace, as it had not been at Roehampton, and he reveled in the intellectual feast spread by such teachers as John Rickaby, Michael Maher and Charles Plater. There were delightful holidays at the Jesuits' summer house on Barmouth Estuary in Wales which sent young Meadows back to his ontology and psychology with fresh enthusiasm. He passed his courses with distinction and was ready for the period of teaching, called regency, which occupies Jesuit scholastics between their philosophical and theological studies.

Wimbledon College, a Jesuit public school in a suburb of London, was the scene of Meadows' first innings as a teacher. It was the autumn of 1914 and he was strangely upset at the sight of so many men in uniform in the streets of London, while he wore the black suit which

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exempted him from death. He was not quite convinced that the priesthood was for him, and he feared that to continue in doubt might be a fraud against his country in her time of danger. He hung on at his post for two years, loyal but discontented, a conscientious master who corrected themes far into the night and rose at five-thirty each morning to make his meditation. Then he decided to settle the impasse:

I was never disillusioned about the Jesuit Order. I was simply disillusioned about my place in it. I have set out to give an account of Jesuits that should be honest as well as good-natured. Having known them through ten years of my life, I say without reservation that at no time did I lose my respect for the Jesuit Institute, its ideals or its distinctive trait, which is the cult of the Christian virtue of obedience. On the contrary, I have come to admire the Order more, not less, with years and experience. But somewhere at this time I lost my way.

Honorably dispensed from his vows, he became successively a soldier, teacher, consular agent, journalist, novelist. His varied experiences bring an urbanity and warmth of judgment to his memoir, and enable him to do more than lay bare the motives of the ex-religious. For this book is a eulogy of his former brethren, the "obedient men" who, through God's unsearchable mercy, were able to make their own Cardinal Newman's assurance to Gerard Manley Hopkins: that the Jesuit discipline was not too hard and that it would bring him to heaven.

Victory and Defeat

THE GREAT POWERS AND EASTERN EUROPE. By John A. Lukacs. American Book Co. \$7.50.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

THIS work, which has involved an epic delving through an

astonishing range of materials in many languages, is an impressive scholarly achievement. At long last the diplomatic history of Eastern Europe is told in detail and related to the activities of the great powers. There is an almost unavoidable great-power snobbery which drives historians to ignore the smaller states. Mr. Lukacs has admirably corrected that distorted viewpoint. His high seriousness, general impartiality, great learning and gifts of exposition bring the promise of a valuable career in American scholarship.

The vision, which gave the author his theme, is the constriction of Europe. With the Bolshevik Revolution the thousand-year Europeanization of Russia ended, and thirty years later, after another war, the political and cultural boundaries of Europe "were pushed back another five hundred miles to the west," back to the line of Charlemagne's empire. This great retrogression, this defeat of Europe, is here described in the terms of diplomacy and force. The years 1934-1938 witness a diplo-

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matic revolution in which the Axis is formed and the Fascist aggressors acquire preponderant power over France and England. After the sad, ignoble story of Munich, Eastern Europe is powerless between the "German Hammer and the Russian Anvil." War and unskillful diplomacy end with the loss of Eastern Europe. In explaining this the author has not yielded to the cult of the Roosevelt-scapegoat — and for an Eastern European the temptation is great, because, whatever Roosevelt's motives were, he failed, and the Eastern European lives in the hell of his failure.

This admirable work is not wholly without flaws. Longer reflection might have given Mr. Lukacs greater mastery over his somewhat broken narrative. Indeed, the author fought a not entirely successful battle to present his work meaningfully ordered and, at the same time, to include the ever-increasing flood of published materials. There are moments when we are wearily treated to a rumor of a rumor. A trace of Hungarian *hauteur* towards the

Ukrainians is regrettable. It is also regrettable but understandable that a Hungarian account should lack sympathy for the politics of the Czechs. Mr. Lukacs is not fair to the memory of that stoutly honest man, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, in implying that Bevin delayed some weeks before publicly protesting against Soviet actions in the Balkans. Mr. Lukacs also attempts to give too much meaning to the change from Eden and Churchill to Bevin and Attlee. Bevin spoke out at the earliest moment possible, in connection with the King's speech. He spoke forcefully and to the dismay of Labor's left wing. Secretary Byrnes, on the other hand, was not only naive, but his eager desire to make settlements and to hide disagreements increased Soviet bargaining power.

Such a listing of criticisms should not obscure the great esteem this reviewer has for this work, which will occupy a prominent and honored position among my reference books and histories. It is in a real sense an important achievement.

Humanist's Report

MAN'S UNCONQUERABLE MIND. By Gilbert Highet. Columbia University Press. \$2.75.

By JOHN P. SISK

THE ingratiating qualities of Professor Highet's style are, I think, sufficiently known by now. His prose is not only clear and intelligible (as that of many professors is) but personal (as that of too many professors is not). He is not afraid to be eloquent, to let himself go with his subject, having a firm enough grasp upon it so that eloquence is no risk.

Professor Highet's subject in *Man's Unconquerable Mind* is the powers, limits and future of our "fifty-ounce organ of exploration and adventure." An essay with a subject so extensive requires the ability to move adroitly in all directions over the area of Western culture if it is to read like anything but facile generalizing. Professor Highet has the ability. An impressive amount of unobtrusive schol-



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From Abroad

The Commonwealth's reputation for sharp, personal reporting of the European scene is enhanced by the noteworthy dispatches of three regular correspondents.

Reporting from Italy and the Middle East is GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN, a Swedish author and journalist who represents the "Stockholms Tidningen," Sweden's leading daily, in Rome and the Mediterranean area.

French affairs are reported by a former Resistance editor, ROBERT BARRAT. M. Barrat was an editor of "Temoignage Chretien," and now is executive secretary of the Catholic Center for French Intellectuals in Paris. His book on Morocco, "Justice pour le Maroc," was recently published in France.

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY is this magazine's correspondent in Great Britain. A former editor of "The Economist," he taught industrial relations at Oxford and is now on the faculty of Cardiff University. He is active in the European Union Movement and the Catholic Social Guild.

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arship ribs up this structure. One senses everywhere that the generalizations rest upon a depth of assimilated particulars.

There will be disagreement, of course. The author is not writing as a controversialist, but he measures as he goes. How is one to write of "man's right to knowledge and the free use thereof" in relation to the Classic and Hebraic past, the Dark and Middle Ages, the Renaissance and Reformation, education, thought control, modern politics, science and censorship without stirring up opposition? Progressivists may object to his insistence on the importance of the past, empiricists may object to his awareness of truth beyond experience, some liberals will object to his treatment of censorship, many educators will be as unhappy as they always are when a classical scholar casts his eye on modern education.

I would myself question what Professor Highet makes of his division of universities into those "devoted to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge above all other aims" and those "devoted to supporting authority." I would not so much object to what is said about the former as what is implied about the latter: that in the pursuit of knowledge and truth they must generally be looked upon with some suspicion because of their commitment to a point of view. Beside there is the question not only of the extent to which the committed university makes the non-committed one possible, but of the very existence, except in theory, of a non-committed university. I believe also that Professor Highet has misinterpreted the doctrine of infallibility: his long note on Church censorship so that it seems to extend to any pronouncement by a Church authority.

But this remains a useful essay. There is a great need for such books as this, wherein the university teacher addresses himself to the literate public, but does so with dignity and integrity, out of a sense of responsibility that cannot be satisfied with an audience made up exclusively of his colleagues.

New Orleans

FABULOUS ANCESTOR. By Donald Demarest. Lippincott. \$3.50.

By JOE DEVER

WAY down yonder in New Orleans, Donald Demarest has an interesting family tree. It is one thing, of course, to have "fabulous ancestors," it is another thing to do them into words so that they will be of sustained interest to a national book-reading public.

When you do such a local color job about a proud yet moth-eaten town like New Orleans you're up there slugging it out with old reliables like Harnett Kane and Francis Parkinson Keyes. That is why Mr. Demarest deserves a lot of credit: (1) for having the courage to submit to comparison in the field and (2) for having the memory and the craft to make his boyhood experi-

ences with "Granny" everywhere vivid, pungent and authentic.

In a short preface Mr. Demarest explains that the book "is not non-fiction because I have made little attempt to verify fact. The only thing I have tried hard to do is to remain true to memory and cleave fast to dreams." His memory of Grandma Crèvecoeurs has served him well and it is she, droll, elderly, aristocratic daughter of the old South, who dominates the series of vignettes about a proud, cavalier society that was and the proud, pathetically nostalgic society that is.

Mr. Ligurno, the Italian tailor friend of "Sonny" seems to sense the meaning of Grandma's brave, aristocratic attempt to turn back the clock for herself, her family, her friends: "You mustn't blame them." Mr. Ligurno says. "After such a war and such a defeat, such poverty and such humiliation! Especially for the Latin temperament. I know. I have seen it in Italy. That is why I left. There is a warping of the mind and soul that will take many generations, many prayers, much penance to erase."

Mr. Demarest, with his lush descriptions of food, scenery and ceremony in New Orleans, will surely win the kind regard of the Chamber of Commerce. His evocation of the French Market, for example, recalls the mouth-watering food inventories of Thomas Wolfe. And in the droll-to-rheumy saga of Granny's deeds and memories, the author exhibits a wit both lively and acrid.

The plotless plane that is a series of vignettes does tend to slow reader-interest in the work. But always there is Granny and Sonny off on another visit to friends, relatives or quaint public places and all the vividness, pungency, and trim folder charm.

Personal

Our long editorial "What Is The Commonweal?" [February 5, 1954] was not the first time the editors of this magazine spelled out what they were trying to do. In the very first issue, the founders wrote that The Commonweal "will have as a sure background the continuous, unbroken tradition of the historic Mother Church. But it will be in no sense—nor could it possibly assert itself to be—an authoritative or authorized mouthpiece of the Catholic Church. It will be the independent, personal product of its editors and contributors, who, for the most part, will be laymen."

Senator McCarthy, alas, is not the only one who has accused The Commonweal of "falsely and dishonestly masquerading under the title of being a mouthpiece for the Catholic Church." Actually the charge is groundless, not only because we have often gone out of our way to define The Commonweal's exact status, but because the Church actually takes no position on most of the moral issues which this magazine has.

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Father Francis Sweeney, S.J., as at Boston College.

M. A. Fitzsimons is a member of the history faculty at Notre Dame.

John P. Sisk is on the faculty of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington.

Joe Dever is the author of *My Home* and *A Certain Way*.

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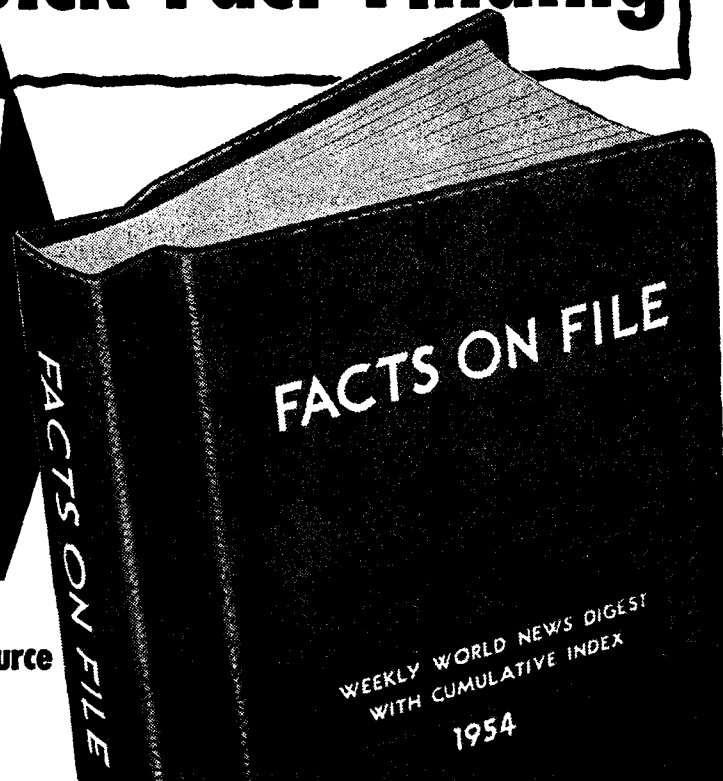
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